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the 28th of February of this year, I found the steep sides of this nook well covered with three kinds of ferns in good fruit, a number of specimens of each of which I gathered and took away. Unfamiliar as I was with southern ferns, I did not doubt that I had three distinct species of Spleenwort, but upon subsequent examination of them, and reference to the books on North American ferns, I found that one of the ferns was not described.

These three ferns, of which there were hundreds growing in close proximity or actual contact one with another, were *Asplenium dentatum*, Linn., *Asplenium myriophyllum*, Presl., and a third form of the same genus, larger than either of the others, possessed of those features common to both, having rather the texture and hue of the *dentatum* and a leaf-pattern approximating to that of the *myriophyllum*. I send herewith a specimen of each of the three kinds.

Now, considering that this fern grows in company with *A. dentatum* and *A. myriophyllum* (I do not recollect having seen it otherwise), that it partakes of their characteristics, and is in most respects almost exactly intermediate between them, that it is of more vigorous growth than either of those nearly related species, and that it belongs to a genus the species of which are strongly suspected of sexual looseness, the question arises whether this is not a hybrid product of the two species mentioned.

It is my intention to have a considerable number of specimens of this fern from the locality above described next season, when the question may receive further consideration. In the few specimens I have, the marks of the immediate form appear to be as definite and unvarying as are those of what are considered good species.

ISAAC HOLDEN.

Special Uses and Properties of some Mexican Grasses.

Dr. Edward Palmer has been engaged in making botanical collections in Mexico during several years past, and has given particular attention to ascertain the uses to which plants are applied. The following notes, gathered from him, respecting the uses and properties of the native grasses are of interest:

Bromus segetum, Schl.—The seeds of this grass are used to assist in the fermentation of a favorite drink called Tejuino, used by the Tarahumares Indians who live in the southwestern part of Chihuahua. The basis of this drink is corn, which is first sprouted, then ground on a stone *metate*, after which water is added and a quantity of the seeds of the *Bromus*. Sugar is also added, and the mixture is then placed by a fire for twelve hours. Fermentation soon sets in. It is not strong at first, but after a day or two it is quite intoxicating. As sold in the markets some looks like yeast, other lots are clear and of the taste of beer. Those not accustomed to drink this corn-beer, will for a time find it quite repulsive to the stomach. It is stated that in some countries other species of *Bromus* are used in making a fermented drink.

Elionurus candidus, Hack., called " soccato colorado," or red-grass, from the color of the roots, which have a strong peppery taste and smell. They are used by the Tarahumares Indians and by Mexicans for curing toothache. The root is chewed and a little put into the hollow of the tooth. It is considered very efficacious, and is kept for sale in the markets.

Stipa viridula, Trin. var.—A tall, coarse grass, collected in Coahuila in 1879, which is considered poisonous to cattle, horses and sheep, having a temporary narcotic effect upon them. It is said that only strange animals will eat the grass, as it is shunned by the native animals who have once experienced its effects.

Epicampes robusta, Fourn.—A coarse grass. growing five or six feet high. It has very straight, reed-like culms, half an inch thick at the base, which, after being stripped of their leaves, are used in making rockets, which are much used at the religious festivals in Guadalajara.

Muhlenbergia and *Aristida*.—Several species of these grasses, growing tall and straight, and with close panicles, are used for making brooms. The leaves are stripped off, and the culms are then tied into bundles three or four feet long and of convenient thickness. These brooms are in general use throughout Mexico. The bundles are sometimes flattened and used in whitewashing.

Andropogon Myosuros, Presl.—This has much the appearance of our *A. scoparius*, but less branched. It grows abundantly on hillsides in bunches. There are many long, straight, wiry culms growing together, and the branches are pulled up and used in thatching the houses of the natives at Rio Blanco.

Cyperus nodosus, Willd.—A kind of rush growing about two feet high, with soft, spongy culms, which are braided together to form a kind of fan called Sopladors, commonly used to fan charcoal fires.

Cathestecum erectum, V. & H.—A low-creeping grass, which is used in decoction to afford relief in painful menstruation. The dried grass is kept in the markets and has a reputation in the treatment of female diseases.

Hilaria cenchroides, H.B.K.—Also a low-creeping grass, but stronger and coarser than the preceding one. It is used in decoction as a popular remedy to purify the blood, especially in the case of skin diseases. Found at Guadalajara.

Sporobolus Indicus, R. Br.—A grass growing in large clumps in rich bottoms. It is called Liendrilla. The culms are straight and firm, and are sometimes twisted into ropes which, however, are not durable. The Indians in emergencies make hats and baskets of it. It is not a good grazing grass except when in a young state.

GEO. VASEY.

Index to Recent American Botanical Literature.

Abies Douglasii. (Garden, xxxi, p. 288, figures.)

American Poppies.

Professor Porter has called our attention to an error on page 80 of the BULLETIN, where *Papaver Californicd* is alluded to as the first American representative of the genus. In noting Mrs. Bingham's communication to the Botanical Gazette, we overlooked the well-known *P. nudicaule*, L., of Arctic America and the Rocky Mountain region—as did Mrs. Bingham.

Asperfoliæ—Some West American.—E. L. Greene. (Pittonia, i., pp. 8-23.)

Professor Greene contends that the ordinal name Asperfoliæ is older than Borraginæ and should be adopted. He proposes *Allocarya*, n. gen., for some of the plants referred to (*Eritrichium* and *Krynitzia*) by Dr. Gray, and describes seven new species. Under *Plagiobothrys*, Fisch. and Meyer, he places the *Echidiocarya Arizonica*, Gray, as *P. Pringlei*, *P. microcarpa*, n. sp., and a new variety of *P. canescens*, Gray. *Sonnea*, n.